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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 COLOMBO 000733

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/PB, SCA/A, SCA/INS AND SCA/RA

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CE

SUBJECT: SAARC SUMMIT: BOUCHER AND GILANI FOLLOW UP
WASHINGTON VISIT

Classified By: A/DCM Michael DeTar. Reasons: 1.4(b, d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: In a meeting on the margins of the SAARC summit, Prime Minister Gilani told Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Richard Boucher that he felt his recent meetings in Washington had gone well. Foreign Minister Qureshi objected to Afghanistan's withdrawal from planned bilateral engagements and called for "a ceasefire on negative statements". When asked about recent incidents along the Line of Control, the leaders offered no clear explanation, but emphasized that Pakistan needs to focus on terrorism, rather than a major Kashmir settlement. Foreign Minister Qureshi said that former Foreign Secretary Riaz Khan denied there was ever any agreement with the U.S. regarding the India civil-nuclear agreement, but the new Pakistani government chose to honor the arrangement anyway. Qureshi added he was disappointed and offended that Indian Foreign Secretary Menon had made negative statements about Indo-Pak relations earlier that day. END SUMMARY.

Pakistan has a "good vibe" after D.C. meetings

12. (C) On August 2, Boucher met Pakistani Prime Minister Gilani, Foreign Minister Qureshi, and Foreign Secretary Bashir on the margins of the SAARC summit in Colombo. Prime Minister Gilani reported that his recent meetings in D.C. were "excellent." Gilani said that he invited Speaker Pelosi to speak in Pakistan and that Senator Biden agreed not to push for any conditions on military assistance to Pakistan. "There were positive vibes," Gilani said. Gilani mentioned that on the way to SAARC he stopped off in Islamabad to meet with his service chiefs to follow up on his trip.

Afghanistan still willing to coordinate

13. (C) Gilani said that he and Afghan President Karzai talked informally around the margins of the summit and agreed that they need to coordinate and work closely. Boucher asked what Gilani could tell Karzai about his intentions with regard to the Taliban and ISI. Gilani responded that "we suffer as much as others," and, citing deaths during the recent operation in SWAT, said, "it's almost a war." Qureshi interjected that the Afghans say they are comfortable with Pakistan's new "political government," so he doesn't understand why they have "withdrawn" from the planned Jirga. (Comment: This was a mis-statement, as Afghanistan did not withdraw from the mini-Jirgas.) Qureshi said that his

government has "kept cool" and not reacted to statements because they believe engagement is the only way forward, but he said "we need a ceasefire on statements" from the other side. Referring to the Embassy bombing in Kabul, he said: "there's been a mishap, a hiccup, but life must go on." He added that the jirgas are in both governments' best interest.

Boucher asked if the list of names for the Jirga had been handed over. Qureshi replied that it is complete, but that Pakistan has not yet delivered it to the Afghan side. Boucher encouraged him to give the list of names to the Afghan government.

Pakistan and India: Vienna gesture wasn't enough

14. (C) Qureshi told Boucher that former Foreign Secretary Riaz Khan denied in writing that there was an agreement with former Under Secretary Burns not to criticize or obstruct the US-Indian civilian nuclear agreement. Despite strong objections within Pakistan, the government chose to honor that commitment. Boucher reiterated that there was a commitment but observed that in any case it was in Pakistan's own interest to let the deal go through. Qureshi said that considering the gesture in Vienna, he was disappointed and offended at Menon's statement earlier that day that Indo-Pak relations were at a low point due to recent incidents. Gilani pointed out that in his speech Saturday he had publicly condemned the attack on the Indian Embassy in Kabul.

He reported that he met with Prime Minister Singh and assured him that all of Pakistan's major parties want good relations with India. He says Singh responded saying that

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while the nations had been "getting close" there was now a great deal of public resentment in India. Gilani indicated that recent press about the Kabul incident has been bad for Pakistan's new government. (Note: Foreign Secretary Menon confided to Boucher that Prime Minister Singh had been very tough on Gilani at their bilateral meeting Sunday.)

The Line of Control) out of control?

15. (C) Boucher asked Gilani why there has been an increase in incidents at the Line of Control. Gilani speculated that it might have to do with President Karzai (sic) facing an election year, "and maybe some people want to destabilize my government." However, he did not name suspects or offer a further explanation. "Whoever they are, they are destabilizing my economy, and we must fight it," he said, calling for more intelligence sharing and cooperation.

16. (C) Assistant Secretary Boucher said that India would like to move on the Kashmir issue. Qureshi then said that Pakistan needs to focus on foreign terror, not Kashmir. On Kashmir, he recently submitted four action points to Delhi that he considers more doable: liberalization of the visa regime, enhancing trade, and the Sir Creek and Siachen disputes. He asked for U.S. support on this. Boucher pointed out that fighting terror benefits everyone and encouraged the Pakistanis to look into the Line of Control incidents and ensure that no more occur. Foreign Secretary Bashir said that Indo-Pak mechanisms to control incidents need to be utilized. He reiterated that media pressure is not helping. Boucher thanked the leaders for their commitment and said that "it is a question of control," and that India and Afghanistan need to see Pakistan take actions that will improve relations.

17. (U) Assistant Secretary Boucher cleared this message.
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